

National Child Care Provider Appreciation Day: May 11, 2012

May 11, 2012, is Provider Appreciation Day, a special day to recognize child care providers, teachers, school-age program staff, child care center directors and staff, and all those who work with children and are responsible for their education and care. It is estimated that nearly 11 million children under age 5 are cared for by 2.8 million child care providers in the United States.

Provider Appreciation Day was started in 1996 by a group of volunteers in New Jersey who saw the need to recognize the tireless efforts of providers who care for children of working parents. Momentum and support for this event has grown each year, and recognition presently includes individuals and government organizations throughout North America, Europe, and Asia.

"By recognizing the dedication of child care providers on May 11, we remind our communities of the importance of quality child care and let providers everywhere know that we recognize and value their important work," said Ollie M. Smith, Interim Executive Director of the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), the host organization of Provider Appreciation Day. "Ninety percent of brain development occurs during the first five years of life. Providing quality care for our children – especially during this critical time – will help ensure their future success."

It takes a special person to work in the child care field, and these individuals are often unrecognized. This day offers an opportunity for parents to show their child care providers their appreciation.

To learn more about Provider Appreciation Day or for ideas on how you can thank your child care provider, visit www.providerappreciationday.org.

